



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

TORPEDO-BOAT 240.

A TALE OF THE NAVAL MANŒUVRES.

By G. A. HENTY.

CHAPTER I.

QUEENSTOWN HARBOUR was looking its best on a bright day in the early autumn of 188-. Eight great ironclads were lying anchored in two lines. Inside these lines were half-a-dozen lighter and prettier ships-of-war, the cruisers, more or less fast, of the fleet, and still retaining the outward form of ships, which was more than could be said for the formidable monsters lying outside them. A number of screw colliers added to the life, though hardly to the beauty, of the scene; while moving to and fro among the larger craft were excursion steamers from Cork. A whole fleet of white-winged yachts, steam-launches belonging to the various ships-of-war, and white row-boats with from four to twenty oarsmen, swept along through the water. Now and then a torpedo-boat, carrying a great white wave at her bow, came rushing in from seaward, or steamed out again as if on a life or death mission. Four or five of these craft were moored side by side a short distance astern of the ironclads. Nearer inshore lay a great American liner which had come in half-an-hour before, and was now discharging her mails into a tender, while her passengers clustered along the rails surveying the naval spectacle with lively interest. A group, consisting of a gentleman and two ladies, were standing talking together on the upper deck.

'And you are quite sure you can get us the tickets for the ball, Mr Macnamara?'

'Quite certain, Miss Aspern. I knew from your father's letter that you were coming by the *Alaska*; and, as she was due here this morning, I applied at once to the committee for tickets for you, making sure that you would like to land here; so that, in fact, I have the tickets. But do not let that influence you, as the demand is unlimited, and I have already

promised them should you not care about using them.'

'Then I think that settles it,' the young lady said in a clear, decided voice. 'Don't you think so, mamma?'

Mrs Aspern was no exception to the American rule that the chief end of women is to minister to the wishes and caprices of their daughters from the time that these are out of long clothes to that of marriage, and at once replied, 'Well, if you think so, Clemence; but is there time now?'

'Oh yes, plenty of time. It is fortunate now that we decided in the first place to land here, as our baggage is with the rest of the things for Queenstown. The captain said this morning that he would have it picked out, as we had changed our mind, and meant to go on to Liverpool; but I will go and tell him that our things may go on shore with the rest. Will you go at once, mamma, and tell Harriet to pack the things in the cabin? Tell her she must hurry up, for we shall have to go ashore in half-an-hour.'

'I have got my own steam-launch alongside, Miss Aspern, so you will have until the last possible moment. I think we may count upon an hour yet.'

'Thank you, Mr Macnamara; we can fix things up nicely by that time.'

Mr Macnamara was one of the principal merchants in Cork, and was correspondent and agent for Mr Aspern, a Cincinnati millionaire, whose fortune rested on the solid foundation of pork. Miss Aspern did not care about pork, but was fond of Europe, and made very frequent visits across the Atlantic, sometimes under the chaperonage of her mother, but more often under that of various friends of her father who felt it a distinction to have the wealthy heiress of Thomas Aspern under their charge.

The present was to be a short run, princi-

pally a shopping expedition to Paris; a dozen new dresses from Worth being declared by Miss Aspern to be a positive necessity for the approaching season at New York. As soon as her mother had arranged for her trunks to go ashore with the rest of the Queenstown luggage, she ran below and gave such effectual aid in packing the cabin boxes that in half-an-hour she was again on deck.

'I told you half-an-hour, Mr Macnamara,' she said, 'and everything is fixed up and ready to go ashore.'

'Then the sooner we go the better, Miss Aspern; because I imagine that your trunks will have been labelled on to Liverpool, and we shall want to see them relabelled for Cork. Can I be of any assistance in getting the things up?'

'No, thank you; the steward was bringing them up as I came along. Here comes mamma. Mr Macnamara wants to be off, mamma, so we had better say good-bye at once to the people we know.'

Another five minutes and the party were on board the steam-launch and making for shore.

'I hope you will bring us down here to-morrow again,' Miss Aspern said to him. 'I want to look at those ugly ships close at hand. I suppose they will let us go over some of them?'

'With pleasure, Miss Aspern. It is a sight worth seeing; and though we know—and he smiled—that in most things you are ahead of us, this is one of the things you can't see on your side of the water.'

'No,' the girl said carelessly; 'we haven't turned our attention that way. When we do, I reckon it will be about time for you to take a back seat. I met some of your officers last year at Montreal. I was staying there with a schoolfellow who has married a Canadian, and they were there at the time; they belonged to some ships at Halifax, and had got three weeks' leave. They were quite nice fellows, with no starch about them.'

'Perhaps you may meet some of them to-night, Miss Aspern. Of course the ball is given to the fleet, and most of the officers who are not on duty will be there.'

'Well, I call that downright pretty,' Miss Aspern said later on, as she entered the ballroom. 'That is what we want at home, mamma; we have nothing but black coats. They ought to keep some troops in New York, and dress them up in scarlet like that. It is real good, isn't it? We know what balls are at New York, Mr Macnamara; and I have been to them in London too; and I was at the President's reception in Paris, and there were plenty of uniforms there; but this mixture of blue and scarlet takes the cake altogether.'

'Now, Miss Aspern, shall I find you some partners?'

'Not yet,' the girl said. 'I get plenty of dancing. I should like to look on for a bit.'

The room was indeed full of men in uniform; and although the blue coat of the navy predominated, all the officers of the garrison were present, besides many others who had come down from Dublin and the Curragh. Mr Macnamara was therefore kept busy for some time explaining to Miss Aspern the uniforms of the various branches of the service.

'There,' she exclaimed suddenly—'there is a face I know—that naval officer, Mr Macnamara. He was one of those I met at Montreal; he is a Mr Winter. Please, fetch him to me. Only say a lady wishes to speak to him.'

Lieutenant Winter had no acquaintances in Cork, and his face expressed some little surprise as he was brought across the room. However, the moment he saw Miss Aspern he recognised her.

'Well, Miss Aspern, this is an unexpected pleasure. Who would have thought of seeing you here?'

'Why not? I told you that I was often in England, and that we were sure to run against each other.'

'I remember you said so; but my faith was not strong. I am, of course, most of my time away from England; and when at home I am not to be found in any of the gilded halls of fashion, which you frequent. But when did you come?'

'Only this morning. I arrived in the *Alaska*.'

'You have certainly lost no time, then, Miss Aspern. I saw her in the harbour unloading her mails, but had no notion that you were on board. Well, may I have the pleasure of a dance? After that I shall be delighted to introduce any number of partners to you.'

'We will talk a little first,' the girl said; 'when one once begins to dance there is an end of that. Which of those ships are you in? Mr Macnamara, with whom mamma and I are staying, is going to take us to see them to-morrow, and I shall expect you to do the honours and to explain to me why they are so ugly.'

'I shall be delighted to do the honours, Miss Aspern; but, as far as my own ship goes, one might as well invite a lady to a tea-party in a dolls' house. I command one of the torpedo-boats.'

'Oh yes. I saw them rushing in and out of the harbour. They look wicked, those boats do; but it must be delightful to sit on deck and feel them flying along.'

'Yes,' Winter said doubtfully, 'that is certainly pleasant; and I can assure you it wants something pleasant to make up for the drawbacks of existence upon them. If you can fancy yourself living in a dog's kennel, rolled and shaken, thrown up and bumped down, with a perpetual hum and vibration in your ears, you would quickly wish yourself on shore again. The motion is so tremendous that it upsets even old sailors, and

it is necessary to be always on the watch and to keep tight hold of something, or you are likely to be jerked across the cabin when below, and break an arm or a couple of ribs, or be sent overboard if you are on deck. But, such as it is, I shall be delighted to show you the craft, and afterwards to take you over some of the battle-ships.'

Then the conversation turned to Montreal, the mutual friends there, and the occasion upon which they had met; and three or four dances went by before they stood up. Then, after putting down his name for two dances, with her permission the young lieutenant brought up several of his friends, and her card was very soon filled up.

'I have several friends whom I want to introduce to you, Miss Aspern,' Mr Macnamara said, coming up to her afterwards.

'Too late, Mr Macnamara; my card is quite full. I suppose I ought to say that I am sorry, but I am not. I can dance with Irishmen any time I am out in the States, but these young sailors, in the glory of their uniform, are delightful. I don't mean Mr Winter, of course, because I have seen him before, and we are old friends, but the others. Your people are generally stiff, at any rate until the ice is broken; and then, you know, in London the young men I am introduced to all know that dad is rolling in money, and they regard me as an American heiress, and it is unpleasant altogether. Well, I mean to enjoy myself to-night.'

Miss Aspern did enjoy herself, and on her drive back to Mr Macnamara's declared that it was the most pleasant evening she had ever spent; while Winter's friends agreed that the American girl was first-rate fun, with no nonsense about her though she was got up so, and was pretty enough to give herself airs if she had liked. Winter had not thought it necessary to confide to them that she was a very wealthy heiress, for he thought that she would herself prefer that nothing should be said about it. It had been settled that Miss Aspern, with her mother, to whom she had introduced Winter, and Mr Macnamara, should come down to lunch on board Torpedo-boat 240. They were to come off in Mr Macnamara's steam-launch, for Winter could not be sure that he should be able to send the torpedo boat's dingy, and had warned Miss Aspern that it was more than possible that the craft would not be found when she came down.

'They keep us running about, you see. Up goes the signal, "Four torpedo-boats will go out and search the coast for suspicious craft," and it would never do for me to hoist the signal in return, "I am expecting two ladies to lunch, and can't go." So, if I am away, please visit the ironclads first; they are all open for inspection. By the time that you have done them I hope I

may be back. You may be sure that I shall not waste more time than I can help over the run, especially as we know perfectly well that there is nothing to be found, for hostilities do not commence for another ten days.'

Fortunately the exigencies of the service did not require the departure of No. 240 before the arrival of the party from Cork.

'Well, this is a tiny little thing, Mr Winter,' Miss Aspern exclaimed when she stepped on board. And, indeed, after the great ship that she had left the day before, the torpedo-boat looked insignificant. 'And to think that she is really meant for fighting, and that she could destroy one of those ugly monsters over there.'

'Yes, if she could get close to her, and if the ugly monster did not send her to the bottom long before she got near enough to let off one of her torpedoes. Now, with your permission, we will begin by having lunch, because we are under orders to go for a cruise at half-past two.'

'Cannot you take us with you, Mr Winter?' Miss Aspern asked.

'Yes, if you would like to go; but if so I think you had better keep below until we are fairly off. I don't think the Admiral would approve of seeing lady passengers sitting on deck when we are starting on what I suppose he considers service. Once fairly away, of course, you could come up, and then you could see the working of the engines. I would have asked two or three of my friends to meet you, Miss Aspern; but four is the extreme number that can pack into my cabin.

'By the way, before we go down, Mr Macnamara, will you order your launch to sheer off? If she remains alongside, the Admiral might suspect that we had passengers on board.'

The launch was ordered to steam in to the shore, and not to come out again until they saw the torpedo-boat return from her trip.

'Now for the cabin, Mrs Aspern; please be very careful how you go down. Will you and Miss Aspern go down first and seat yourselves at the farther end of the table? That will leave room for us to shift into our places.'

'Well, this is the tiniest place I ever took a meal in, Mr Winter. Why, even the cat-boats and the smallest yachts in the bay have better accommodation than your Government gives you.'

'It is quite large enough for one, I can assure you; the smaller the better when she is lively. I told you you would have to make up your mind to rough it if you came on board.'

'Oh, I don't call this roughing it,' she said, 'and you won't get any pity from me except on the score of want of room.'

The young lieutenant had exerted himself to do justice to the occasion; he had slept in Cork, and had there obtained all the materials for a dainty little lunch, with an abundance of choice flowers to beautify the little cabin. So much

did the party enjoy the meal that they were surprised when their host, looking at his watch, begged them to excuse him, as it was time to see about getting under way; and in a minute or two sounds were heard overhead, then there was a clanking of the chains, followed by a slight vibration, becoming more and more rapid until everything on the table quivered and shook. Five minutes later the lieutenant descended into the cabin.

'Now I can let you out of prison, Mrs Aspern; we are nearly a mile from the flag-ship already, and you can safely come up.'

Camp-stools were arranged on deck, and on these they seated themselves.

'This is splendid,' Miss Aspern exclaimed. 'How we do fly along!'

'We are not going much faster than you travelled across the Atlantic, Miss Aspern; but from your being so much nearer to the surface of the water the speed no doubt appears very much greater.'

'We seem to be going double as fast,' the girl said. 'Are you racing the other boats?'

'No. We are going full speed; that is all. We separate directly. We are to keep along the coast, one of the others goes east, and the other two out to sea, separating as they go; so, between us, we shall search a radius of thirty miles or so. I am glad we have the western station, for the coast is very fine in that direction. When you are disposed for a change you shall inspect the craft—that is, as far as you can inspect it, for you must content yourself with looking down the scuttle into the men's quarters, as you could not possibly get down there; while as to the engine-room, I should advise you to go no farther than the foot of the ladder, for there is not an inch of room to move about, and the heat is prodigious. Forward of that is the torpedo-room. On deck here you see we have machine-guns; they are intended, of course, for action against another torpedo or ship's boats. It would be a mere waste

of time to fire them at big craft, and, indeed, all hands would be below except those required to discharge the torpedoes; for, of course, we should be exposed to a heavy musketry and machine-gun fire.'

Mrs Aspern and Mr Macnamara both declared their preference for sitting quietly on deck; but Miss Aspern investigated all the arrangements of the little craft.

'It is wonderful, mamma,' she said when she returned to her seat; 'everything has got its place, and if it hadn't there would be no moving at all. The engine is the cutest little thing you ever saw, and it goes so fast you can hardly see it; and everything is so bright and clean that you would think the men had no time for anything but rubbing and polishing. When I get back I have quite made up my mind that I shall get dad to have a boat just like this built for me. I mean as to the ship and engines; of course I should have a great deal larger cabin than Mr Winter has, because then there would be no torpedo-room or ammunition-room, or anything of that sort. There would be plenty of room forward for the men and the cooking-place and all that sort of thing, and aft there will be a large cabin where there would be room for ten or twelve to sit down to lunch, and a little private cabin for me. It would do splendid for the Hudson and for the Sound, and for going out and seeing the yacht races.'

The trip over, the ironclads were visited, and their size, cleanliness, and order greatly admired.

'We shall be coming back in about a fortnight, Mr Winter,' Miss Aspern said as she stepped into the launch to go ashore. 'I do hope that we shall find you here; but if not, mind I have your promise that you will come down and see us if you are stationed on our side of the water; and anyhow, mamma will write to the address you have given us, and let you know where you can find us next time we come to England.'

(To be continued.)

THE HOME OF INDIA-RUBBER.

ACROSS THE HEAD-WATERS OF THE AMAZON.

By A MAN ON THE SPOT.



AMONG the consequences of the enormous increase in the use of india-rubber, which from being a little-known commodity has become one of the necessities of modern civilisation, has been the rapid exploration and development of the forest-covered regions drained by the Amazon and its affluents. From these tropical latitudes, where, during the driest season, brimming rivers skirt endless leagues of gum-forest, and where during the summer months the water enters everywhere,

and makes of thousands of square miles of tropical verdure lakes in which one may easily be lost and perish of want and fever, the india-rubber of the world is brought. From these surroundings of danger, of pestilence, of famine, great fortunes have been, and are being, gained.

The constant pressure of demand upon supply, besides doubling the price of the product, has driven the rubber-seekers farther and farther into the interior, and has resulted in all the forest readily accessible to the navigable streams being taken up under some form of concession

from the government exercising jurisdiction in the locality, or by the simple process of taking possession under the title conferred by the power of a repeating rifle. The working of these properties involves a life of great hardship for all those concerned. The workers are actually, though not nominally, slaves. They are usually brought under contract from the better-populated and healthier districts, receiving an advance of from £10 to £30 each, or from six months' to a year's wages; and, from the moment this advance is made to the end of a life which will be wretchedly short and full of misery, these unfortunate men can never hope to pay what they owe, and remain permanently in debt to their employers.

Having been transported by canoe or *batalon* to some far interior point, the rubber-gatherer is put down in the steaming forest, inundated during some months of each year, where his rations will be a little rice, dried meat, salt (a very little of the latter, which is often worth from one shilling and sixpence to two shillings a pound), coffee, sugar, and *cañasa* (the vilest form of liquor, made from the sugar-cane), and the products of the soil, such as bananas, &c., that he can grow or finds planted there by his predecessors. The item of liquor, although last on the list, is the most important. This class does not include any teetotalers and very few moderate drinkers among its members; drink, cards, and the lowest forms of vice are the only recreations of the rubber-gatherer's life, which in the case of an ordinary man may extend to five years, or with an exceptionally strong constitution to seven or even ten. In the early morning the gatherer swallows his cup of black coffee and his 'trags' of liquor, takes with him a number of earthenware or tin gill cups, a piece of clay, and a small hatchet, and starts out to visit the rubber-trees, which will number from one hundred to one hundred and fifty, in his *estrada* or section. He has previously cut through the forest a narrow path, and built himself a furnace for the treatment of the milk which he will collect. At the first tree he makes three V-shaped incisions with his hatchet as high as he can reach, and at equal distances around the tree, which to-morrow he will repeat a little lower down, until at the end of the season he will have reached the ground. From these incisions the milk immediately begins to flow, and he places beneath each one of his cups, making it adhere to the tree with the clay which he carries. This is his work until he has tapped all his trees; and by this time he will have worked back to his hut, and is ready for a breakfast of a little dried meat, mandioca flour, and liquor, of which the two former are probably covered with green-mould or are half-rotten from the steaming damp of the swamp in which he lives. He has now to collect his cups, which should be

nearly full of the milk which is the first stage of india-rubber, and to coagulate it in his furnace. This is constructed of mud, with an opening above, over which is hung a paddle with a broad blade smeared with clay. This blade is covered with the milk, and the furnace fed with a special palm wood, called in the upper districts the *motacu*, and lower down the *urucury*. The dense black smoke which envelops the paddle coagulates the milk, which is kept constantly renewed until the resultant mass weighs from ten to twenty pounds. It is now stripped from the blade like a glove from the hand, and we have the crude rubber of commerce, which, if carefully gathered and smoked, is of the finest class.

In addition to the privations and hardships incidental to a life so isolated, these men are compelled to work for several hours each day in a swamp in which they may sink from their ankles to over their knees, they must constantly pass rivers swarming with alligators, are exposed to agues, fevers, and that terrible disease known as *espundia*, surrounded by poisonous snakes and insects, pestered by clouds of mosquitoes, cut off from all healthy recreation, and, finally, die, often alone, in some miserable hut or in the deep recesses of the forest, where their very bodies will be abandoned to the tiger and the alligator.

As we penetrate farther into the continent we begin to leave behind us the immense steaming plain of the Amazon, and find districts on the great upper plains watered by the tributaries of that enormous river—themselves waterways of great size—where the inundations are slight or altogether cease, and where we no longer have the miasmatic air nor the fetid smell of rotting vegetation; but in proportion as the country becomes more habitable and healthier the india-rubber becomes scarcer and of a lower quality. For the rubber-tree needs for its greatest perfection those conditions which are most detrimental to human existence—intense heat and abundant moisture. In those upper plains the climate is entirely healthy; the thermometer ranges from 40° to 98°; the country is suitable to Europeans, is rich in all natural products, and has immediately behind it a sanatorium readily accessible—the eastern range of the Andes, thirteen thousand feet high. We find the regions not subject to inundations commencing at an altitude of about fifteen hundred feet, mostly covered with a forest of moderate size, and producing sugar, coffee, vanilla, mandioca, rice, maize, bananas, and other fruits; and here cattle-breeding on a large scale is being gradually introduced. The expense of rearing cattle is confined to paying a few men, usually Indians, who periodically round them up and slaughter the required number, 'jerking' the flesh in the sun, melting the fat and packing it into *gurrone*s, to be sent to light the mines of the coast ranges, and drying the hides to be hereafter shipped to the coast.

The value of these products ranges from eight to twenty shillings per head of cattle, but the cost of production is almost nothing. Were capital to be introduced into these regions, the hides could be made into leather, the grease into candles, and uses found for the other products upon the spot; but as yet the country is entirely undeveloped, and will probably remain so while fortunes are to be made in rubber, even at the expense of life and health. From the valleys, which bring down the melted snows of the Andes to form the rivers, and finally to swell the great Amazon, comes the finest coffee in the world; almost every stream contains gold in its bed; and the vanilla, which grows here wild and is very easily cultivated, commands a ready sale at very high prices.

The india-rubber in these upper districts has never yet been worked, although now the price has risen so greatly as to make it probable that even this, which is of second quality and not abundant, would give good results. The communications are naturally very defective. Canoes hollowed out of a single tree and boats built on the banks navigate nearly all the known rivers; and there is also a little fleet of steamers which ply between the rapids of the lower rivers and the headwaters of navigation; while below the rapids steamers owned by English and other European companies make regular trips to the Atlantic. The western outlet is by crossing the eastern Cordilleras by mule-paths, badly made and very indifferently kept up. But a journey from the rubber districts to the Pacific is one of great interest and by routes very little known. From the principal interior towns to the head of navigation you travel by a steam-launch, probably built in Glasgow or Blackwall, and put together on the upper side of the rapids. As you gradually move westward the river becomes narrower and shallower, until at last you reach, after a voyage of two or three weeks, the highest point of navigation.

If it is clear weather you will now see far away in front of you, perhaps a hundred or a hundred and twenty miles off, the summits of the Cordilleras, probably capped with snow. Here you will exchange water for land, and in the little port which marks the end of the road you will begin to perceive that, though as yet on the Atlantic side of the mountains, you are now nearing the Pacific side of the continent. Rubber is no longer the only subject of conversation; the talk will be of coffee, sugar, hides, distilling, and of imports from the coast; and, after perhaps some months or years, you will again hear the tang-tang of the mules as the old bell-mare is led in with a long string of mules behind her laden with cargo. Your friend the steam-launch is soon loaded with this and similar cargo, gives a farewell whistle, and in a few moments has turned the corner, and has broken the only tie between you and the Atlantic. If you have

spent some years in the *gomales* you will find the ride out a trying one. You have to climb thirteen thousand feet, and the road is not a turnpike. Sometimes you will need both your hands to thrust aside the branches, and, having forgotten to keep your toes well turned in, will catch your feet in a root, with much straining on the part of the mule and much agony on yours as the result. Or in some of the deep ditches into which the road is sometimes worn you will forget to raise your feet, and the mule will drag you along forcibly, scraping the banks on both sides, entirely unable to understand why you should want to stop. At first at night you will camp in the dry bed of some backwater of the river, where you may hear great *antas* crashing through the tall reeds on their way to drink, or the deep murmur, hardly to be called a growl, of the jaguar; then in the early morning a dip in the river, which is already becoming more of a torrent; after that a bowl of *lagua*, a mess composed of maize meal, dried meat, fat, salt, and water, flavoured with the universal *aji*, or red pepper—and so to march.

The farther you advance westward the forest becomes less luxuriant and the animals less formidable. On your river journey you will have seen the *marimono* monkey, a great black beast standing four feet and more high; then, later on, the *trapiche*, a smaller red monkey, uttering a peculiarly harsh cry, supposed to resemble the sound from a badly-oiled *trapiche*, or cane-crushing machine; then the ordinary *mons*, scant of hair and hideously ugly, the night-monkey, who sleeps all day and amuses himself and keeps his neighbours awake all night by a particularly doleful whistling; and, last, the 'ladies' monkey,' a little fellow, hardly larger than your hand, and very readily tamed. As the days pass and you have mounted some thousands of feet, the country seems to unroll itself behind you, and you begin to get some of the most wonderful views in the world; and if it is the winter-time you will begin to wish that you had several thick suits of clothes with you, that you might put them all on at once. At last, after a final climb of four or five thousand feet, which you find you are expected to do in five hours, you will leave behind you the forest, which has been your companion so long, and emerge upon the grassy sides of the eastern Cordilleras. And now, when the top is gained, let us hope that the day is clear and not too cold; for, looking back, you will see all the way you have so laboriously come, and in the far, far distance the dark level line of forest which marks the great plain in which you said farewell to the little steamer; while between you and it are numberless spurs, gorges, valleys, mountain torrents, and endless leagues of dark-green forest, forming a wonderful contrast to the scene before you. For there, looking westward, you see a

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country of great altitude, wrinkled with hills, barren, treeless, waterless, covered with coarse grass, dreary and uninviting. The forest has ended some thousand feet below you, and is replaced here by the poorest of herbage, watered by the scantiest of rains. And when you pursue your journey, from that farthest peak upon the

western horizon you will see the same parched, waterless country, only now with less of herbage, gradually changing into a frightful desert, scorching hot during the day and bitterly cold at night, until at length the waters of the Pacific end the vista, and give you an opportunity to renew your acquaintance with steamers and civilisation.

THE MASTER AND THE BEES.

By ISABEL MAUDE HAMILL, Author of *A Bit of Blue China*, *The Golden Shoes*, &c.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.



T was an old-fashioned, high-walled garden, in which grew all sorts of sweet-smelling, old-fashioned flowers—mignonette, stocks, and lad's-love predominating. At the far end were several beehives, whose inhabitants

had chosen the most inconvenient time of the whole day—11.30 A.M.—for their owner to swarm. They heeded nothing that he was a schoolmaster, and that at the very moment in which they were hanging in thick brown clusters on the branch of a neighbouring tree he was deep in the mysteries of Cæsar's *Gallie War*, surrounded by a group of lads whose eyes, sad to say, looked with more longing through the open windows at the gaily-coloured butterflies flitting hither and thither than at the Latin books before them.

Suddenly the master looked out eagerly, his quick ear having caught the faint sound of buzzing in the air. He strained his eyes in the direction from which it came, and saw a large, dark mass moving slowly away over the garden-wall.

Now, bees were one of his two hobbies; the other was butterflies; and to lose a swarm was more than he could contemplate with equanimity. But what could he do? If it were said in the little town that the Grammar School master neglected the boys to look after his bees it might get to the governors' ears—and then!

What a dilemma to be placed in! For a moment he hesitated; then he decided that the bees must go, and with an inward groan, which perhaps accounted for the outward sharpness of his manner when he next spoke, he turned his eyes from the bees to books and boys.

'Such beauties, too!' he murmured.

'Yes, sir. I didn't quite catch what you said,' remarked a bright-eyed lad, the wag of the class.

'I did not speak. Go on with your work, Robertson; you are always looking about and listening when your eyes should be on your book.'

'Beg pardon, sir; but I really thought you spoke. And—I thought I heard the bees;' and Robertson winked at the next boy as he made this remark.

'You attend to your lessons, sir, and never

mind the bees,' replied the poor man, irritated to think that this sharp youngster dare make a joke at his expense.

Lessons were over; and, as the clock struck twelve, the boys rushed out of the schoolroom into the field attached to the head-master's house, which was used as a playground, and there let off their superabundant steam.

Edward Martyn rose, locked his desk as soon as the last boy had disappeared, and, putting on a straw hat, walked slowly towards the hives.

He was a tall, thin man, with the slight stoop which often betokens the student; and his feet and hands, though not large, had the appearance of being loosely jointed. His hair inclined to red, and his somewhat straggling beard partook of the same hue; but his face was that of a scholar and a thinker. He was, as are many intellectual, thoughtful men, retiring and shy, and a bachelor. He had been master of Burycum-Thorpe Grammar School upwards of four years, and during that time had gone very little into society; while the young ladies rather made fun of him and his hobbies—in fact, behind his back, they were so rude as to call him 'The Insect Man.'

The few who had taken the trouble to know Edward Martyn appreciated him greatly. He had a fund of information concerning the animal world which made him a delightful companion on an excursion; and many a happy ramble he and one or two kindred spirits indulged in on a holiday afternoon.

His housekeeper, a woman of fifty, had come with him to Bury, and woe be to any boy whom she heard making fun of their master, or indulging in jokes at his expense, as, alas! is the habit of schoolboys. Mrs Peggy Partington was the sort of person of whom people stood rather in awe. Shrewd in her dealings and sharp in manner, the tradesman who attempted to overcharge her came in for a lecture on his moral obliquities that made him wish heartily he had never tried to extract the twopence or threepence out of her; had the money expended been her own she could not have laid it out to better advantage. She thought there was no one in the

world like her master, and she had good reason for thinking so.

When under-master in another town he had lodged with her; she had then been a widow for upwards of seven years, and had found it a hard struggle to make ends meet. Her only daughter inherited the father's complaint—consumption; and when Edward Martyn first went to them he found things at a very low ebb. He it was who procured delicacies to tempt the invalid's appetite, who paid for her out of his slender allowance to go to a convalescent home, and who, when the end came, took the burden and responsibility of the funeral arrangements. Well might the mother think that there never could be another as good and kind as he; and when he asked her if she would like to give up her house and go to Bury-cum-Thorpe with him as his housekeeper, she wept tears of joy; the prospect seemed as a glimpse of the heavenly country.

Many would have been surprised had they heard the jokes that passed between the reserved, quiet head-master and his housekeeper; for Peggy's quaint speeches were a source of never-ending amusement to him.

As Edward Martyn stood contemplating the partially deserted hives, and pulling his beard abstractedly, he heard voices on the other side of the wall, and caught the sound of his own name uttered in a young—he was sure it was young—happy voice.

'Indeed,' it said, 'I never spoke to Mr Martyn in my life; and if he is poky, as you call him, he's far cleverer than any one in the town; and it's better to be clever and shy than showy and have nothing in you; and I'—

The voice died away in the distance; but the head-master of Bury-cum-Thorpe Grammar School stood as in a dream: bees, hives, swarms all forgotten; only the voice of a girl pleading his cause remembered. Who was she? Where did she live? What was she like? These questions passed rapidly through his mind, and for the first time he wished that the garden-wall had been low enough to see over.

'So they think I'm poky—do they! But *she* said I was clever; and—yes, I fear I am shy and awkward;' and he heaved a sigh.

The sound of the dinner-gong recalled him to himself, and he hastened down the garden to his lonely meal.

During the evening, whilst busy correcting exercises, a note came for him, as follows:

'SYCAMORE COTTAGE, CHESTNUT LANE,
'BURY-CUM-THORPE.

'DEAR SIR,—A swarm of bees has taken possession of our pear-tree; and my father, knowing that you keep them, wonders if you have lost any. If so, will you be good enough to come and take them, as we are not adepts at "bee-handling"?—Yours truly,

'DOROTHY ADLINGTON.'

He jumped up, exclaiming, 'My swarm! No doubt about it.' And, taking with him his head-net and face-cover, a hive, and one or two other necessary articles for capturing bees, he set off.

He knew Mr Adlington slightly, having met him on committees, and had always regarded him as one of the most intellectual and cultured men of the town. He had retired from business—that of an engineer—some years ago, on account of failing eyesight, and now lived on a modest little income, devoting himself to literary and scientific pursuits. His wife had died soon after the birth of their only child, and he had never married again. It would have been difficult to find a more devoted couple than him and his daughter Dorothy, whom he had imbued with a like enthusiasm for knowledge as himself.

The cottage in which they lived was a long, low, white one, covered with honeysuckle and jasmine; and the rambling old garden contained a wealth of roses which would have delighted the heart of an exhibitor. Two large sycamore-trees stood well back, affording a cool shelter on the hottest day.

As Mr Martyn drew near the house he began to wish he had secured his bees and was safely away. Just as his hand was on the door-bell he heard a voice exclaim triumphantly:

'They *are* Mr Martyn's, father; here he is!' and a vision of white-and-blue appeared from a hidden seat in the garden, followed by Mr Adlington.

'Good-evening, Mr Martyn. Allow me to introduce my daughter Dorothy to you.'

The head-master bowed confusedly to the girl, who extended her hand in a pretty, frank fashion. He would have given much then not to have felt shy or awkward.

'Then the bees are yours, Mr Martyn?'

'I hope so. I lost a beautiful swarm this morning between eleven and twelve.'

'Just when you were fast in school with those tiresome boys,' said Dorothy, laughingly. 'How vexed you must have been!'

'I own candidly my temper was not of the sweetest as I watched them flying over my garden wall,' he answered, smiling too; 'but I am in luck's way if I get them after all.'

'What fun to see them taken!'

'It depends upon their behaviour whether it is fun, my dear,' said her father.

A low buzzing sound and a few stray bees reminded them that they were nearing the proximity of the swarm; and Mr Martyn's long experience warned him that they were evidently angry. Seeing this, he advised Miss Adlington and her father to move to a safe distance.

A ladder having been procured, the master stepped quietly up, and, after much coaxing and persuasion, secured his swarm, but not without several nasty stings on hands and neck.

Miss Adlington, on seeing these, insisted on his going into the house, in order that the stings might be extracted and a little ammonia applied.

For the first time in his life since he was a boy, Edward Martyn found himself submitting willingly to the ministrations of a woman; and that woman—a girl whose blue eyes, shaded by long lashes, and hair that fell in natural waves on her broad brow, combined with her soft and gentle touch—had made the shy, stiff head-master of Bury-cum-Thorpe Grammar School wish—feel—oh! he hardly knew what, a something new and strange.

After the application of the remedy he lingered on in a sort of awkward way, as though wanting an excuse to stay.

Dorothy, with her quick perception, soon put him at ease; and before many minutes had elapsed her father and he were busily discussing the latest scientific problem over a cup of coffee and a cigar.

When he returned home, at 11.30, Mrs Peggy looked at him in mild surprise. She had never known him out so late since they came to Bury-cum-Thorpe.

'Yes, sir,' she replied, in answer to some remark he made about being rather late—'yes, sir, I was getting a bit nervous-like, you being so reg'lar in your habits. I was afraid something had happened you.'

'Oh no! only something pleasant. I have secured my lost bees.'

'That's a good thing. It's to be hoped the creatures 'll have more sense next time than swarm in the middle of school-time.'

'Oh, I don't mind. I'm rather glad they did;' and as he said this he looked at the red marks on his hands, and felt again the touch of soft white fingers.

'Rather glad they did!' Had she heard aright? He must be a lit sleepy and tired, and hardly knew what he was saying.

On the contrary, he had never been so wide awake in his life; and had his housekeeper seen him, an hour later, lay in his drawer a sweet-scented white rose, which he had picked up as it fell from Dorothy Adlington's waist, she would have pronounced him neither sleepy nor tired, but 'gone a bit in his 'eal, through overwork an' the worry of them tiresome boys, as is enough to turn anybody's brain.'

BAMBOROUGH.

By SARAH WILSON.



SIR THOMAS MALORY tells us in his *Morte d'Arthur* (printed by Caxton) that there were two opinions in his day as to the identity of the Garde Joyeuse of Sir Lancelot du Lake, for whereas some men said it was Bamborough, others said it was Alnwick; and in later times Berwick-upon-Tweed has also been deemed likely to have been the storied stronghold. For various geographical and topographical reasons, it has now come to be conceded they were correct who said it was Bamborough. Quite recently, in an examination of an ancient cemetery about three hundred yards south of Bamborough Castle, marked Danish on the Ordnance map, an older one was found below it, at a depth of several feet, having interments within a circle of boulder-stones made in the ancient British manner—the same as that in which Bronwen the Fair was buried on the banks of the Alaw. This proof of ancient British occupation gives us leave to believe that there was an ancient British stronghold on the rock where the castle now stands, to which Sir Lancelot may have brought King Arthur's queen when he rescued her from the burning at Carlisle; and that it may have been to the plain below its walls that the king brought his warriors when he followed in pursuit of the fugitives. We may picture to ourselves the beauty of Guinevere, the

curious needlecraft on her robes, the grace and strength of her steed, the king's broken heart, the repentance of Sir Lancelot, and the grinnings of accusing Sir Mordred. There is the same North Sea, now as then swaying, billowing, surging, incoming and outgoing, sometimes blue and flecked with white as with seagulls' wings, sometimes greenish-gray with crowns of creamy foam scattered all over it, and oftener lead-colour and in wild commotion; there is the group of black islands close by that we call the Farne Islands; there are the sandhills along the shore with their light sprinkling of hard grasses; the low-lying shelving rocks that jut out into the waters here and there; and the distant hazy crags and hills—now as then. Only, nearly eight centuries ago the great basaltic steep was capped with a new, strong castle, which still looks down and out upon the older features of its surroundings.

Before this Norman fortress was built there was another on the same grand site that was the residence of the Anglian kings in the days of the Heptarchy. One of these monarchs, Ida, named it Bebbanburgh in honour of his queen, Bebb. Another, Oswald, sent to Scotland for a missionary to convert his subjects to Christianity. A third, Ceolwulf, resigned his crown to retire to the monastery founded on the island of Lindisfarne by this missionary Aidan. The Danes, too, occupied Bamborough for a time. We have

special memory of Sigtryg, who married the sister of Athelstan and afterwards discarded her, a change in his affections which led to the ultimate annexation of Northumbria as well as Bamborough to Athelstan's dominions.

The Norman castle we now see was described by Hoveden in the twelfth century as containing not more than two or three acres of ground; and on the Ordnance map of our own times it is corroboratively set down as but little over three acres in extent. There is a tall square central keep, as in the case of the Tower of London, with a deep well in it, and a space around it enclosed by a high and strong wall, along which are various towers and ranges of apartments. After many incidents of fortune in the course of centuries—King David of Scotland besieged it in 1138, and Archibald Douglas two centuries later—and having been the temporary residence of Queens Philippa and Margaret of Anjou successively, and been bombarded by the Earl of Warwick in 1464, the ancient structure came into the hands of Bishop Crewe, who in 1722, by will, converted it into a charitable institution, where shipwrecked mariners, poor people, children, and invalids all received help of the different kinds they required. Within the last few years it has been purchased by Lord Armstrong, who is now making roads and walks around it, as well as re-arrangements within the walls. In Hoveden's day there was but one hollow road into it, which fact, together with its altitude on the steep rock, doubtless helped to maintain its impregnability. As the new works are in course of progress it can only be said of them that there is no one who knows what end they will have; but it may be mentioned that every care appears to be taken to preserve the honour and interest of the majestic stronghold. Documentary evidence has been preserved which informs us that two Welsh chieftains were kept prisoners in this fortress for more than six years. They had taken possession of some of the castles of Edward the First in Wales, and when captured were placed in the Tower of London, and thence transferred to Bamborough, whence they were taken back to London in 1296 in a dying condition. As late as 1547, in describing the expedition of the Duke of Somerset to Scotland, William Patten mentions the strength and inaccessibility of the castle, and adds that he had heard it was called in Arthur's days Joyous Garde.

The village is spread out on the inland side of the castle, at some little distance from it. In the centre is a long plantation or grove; on either side is a row of one-storied cottages interspersed with larger houses and two or three inns; at the farther end is the pale-gray church standing in a large churchyard. Over the two lines of houses so far apart, with the castle on the high rock at one end of them, the ancient cruciform church at the other, and the grove in the centre, there

abides a charm of association with the memory of two maidens, Dorothy Forster, and Grace Darling. There is no railway station nearer than Lucker, no harbour nearer than North Sunderland; therefore there are no disturbing or effacing influences, and the remembrance of the leading incidents in their lives remains in the village like continuing sunshine. The garden of the square stone house in which Dorothy Forster lived adjoins the churchyard. Every one lingers at the gate to note the stone porch, the low threshold, the square windows, and double side-gables of the house. Every one likes to think of her passing in and out of the doorway with her heart as full of courage and daring whilst she matured her plan for the liberation of her brother, as was Grace Darling's on the night of the great storm and shipwreck with which her equally-regarded name is associated. Below the church in a dim crypt is the burying-place of the Forster family, which everybody should see; and in the church still hangs a piece or two of armour once worn by a member of the same race. In the south transept of the church is the first stone effigy of Grace Darling, or Grace Horsley Darling, to give her name in full. The sea-winds played so much havoc in the way of disintegrating the sandstone of which this effigy is wrought, as it lay under its canopy on the monument in the churchyard, that it has been thought well to replace it there with a facsimile of more enduring hardness, and this one has been brought into the church for preservation. Out in the churchyard, surrounded by an iron railing, is the public monument to the memory of the lighthouse-keeper's daughter. The new effigy is made from a hard stone selected by Lord Armstrong from the hills on his Cragside estate. The heroine reposes at full length on a mattress with an oar by her side, her head raised on a cushion, and her hands closed in prayer. About five years ago the winds again wrecked this memorial, which has now been placed in repair once more. The heroine is buried near her father, among other kindred, under the grasses, a few paces away. The cottage in which she was born is close at hand.

There are ancient British camps in the neighbourhood at Chester Hill, Easington, and Spindleston, all of which are thought to have been subsequently used by Roman legions. Spindleston, which commands fine views of Holy Island, Kyloe Crag, and the Cheviot Hills, has, in addition, a legend, put into verse in 1320, to the effect that the daughter of one of the kings of Bamborough, having been transformed by her stepmother into a laidley worm, or dragon, lived in a cavern here, and roamed the country by night. Her brother heard of the cruel enchantment, built a ship with masts of rowan-wood, and sailed to her deliverance. He landed with his followers on Budle Sands, and

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kissed his sister thrice; whereupon she resumed her natural form, and the stepmother became a toad, and retired to the bottom of a well in one of the towers of the castle. There is a Roman way, as well as a pilgrims' road; and there are fragments of a monastery of preaching friars, and various other objects of minor interest; but the attraction of the Farne Islands dotting the sea eastwards exceeds them all.

They attracted St Cuthbert more than twelve hundred years ago, for he took up his abode upon the one nearest to the shore; and in the intervening centuries there have been many attempts to bring them within the range of usefulness to mankind. There was a strong and stark peel-tower built in old times upon the one St Cuthbert had thus distinguished, which is but little more than a mile out at sea from Bamborough; and a chapel was also built upon it in some long-past day, in connection probably with a small priory which the Durham ecclesiastical authorities established in it, both of which erections have been repaired from time to time and are still standing; and in these later days lighthouses have been built upon two of the islands about three miles apart, known as the Near Light and the Far Light. Those who count the islands differ in their opinion of their number on account of high tides completely covering many of the smaller ones, and very low tides exposing a few more than are generally visible. Twenty-eight are set down in the Ordnance Survey. There is sufficient grass growing on some of them to warrant the shipment of a cow or 'beast' to them occasionally. A sail out to them is an event long to be remembered. It is a pleasure to see Grace Darling's little sanctuary as it is passed by in ascending the winding stair of the lighthouse on the Longstone to attain the glass-covered chamber on the summit, from which the brilliant light shines forth that is so much to all at sea within its influence, and to note the admirable cleanliness and neatness that prevail in all the arrangements. On attempting to land on the slippery rocks of some of the other islands one is almost deterred by the cries and flappings of wings of myriads of sea-birds, for they are the breeding-places of cormorants, eider-ducks, puffins, guillemots, and gulls of every description. Some years ago the islands were let like a farm for the sake of the kelp, wild-fowl, feathers, and the few seals that were found upon them, at the small rental of £16 per annum; but now they are cared for by an association, and no one is granted permission to visit them till he has signed an undertaking not to remove any of the eggs that are to be seen on all sides, or otherwise molest the feathered inhabitants. There are sometimes eighteen eggs in the nest of an eider duck; recently a heron was observed to build a nest four feet high on the island called Wide-opens; and the watchers of the association take note, among other things, of two pairs of roseate terns that

neither increase in number nor leave the islands altogether.

There was a great castle on the coast a few miles to the north of Bamborough, at Berwick-on-Tweed (the railway station now stands on its site); and another at Dunstanborough, a few miles to the south of it. This, though in frayed ruins, is still of considerable consequence, for the great gatehouse, that was eventually made into a keep, with its two round towers pierced with arrow-slits below and double-lights in the next story and single-lights still higher, its cavernous archway, stone vaulted and grooved for a portcullis, and five carved corbels that carried some projecting defence above, is yet remaining. The curtain-wall enclosed about ten acres. The south side of it had four towers, one of which is still known as the Margaret Tower in remembrance of the deeds done in the Wars of the Roses, when the castle changed ownership five times with the varying fortunes of the rival parties. Another tall tower with walls six feet thick still keeps guard over the remains and over the great deep chasm in the basaltic rock in which the sea boils up and rumbles portentously, called the Rumbling Churn. But there is historical mention of a third castle of which no traces have hitherto been discovered. This is the fortress built by William Rufus near Bamborough, when he found he could not reduce that stronghold. It is spoken of as Malvoisin, as one of those evil neighbours that Norman warfare devised for a means of vanquishing foes who would not yield to less extreme measures. Philologists have made the interesting suggestion that perhaps the name of this structure is preserved in the adjacent township of Mousen.

And so it has come to pass that Bamborough is encrusted with traditions that the storms of more than a thousand years have not swept away. In addition to the glamour arising from Queen Guinevere's residence in it, some claim for it the romance of having been the resting-place of the 'gay-beseen' lady, the fair Isoud, when Sir Tristram conducted her from her home. These rumours may be only the imaginings of those troubadours and trouvères who could tell likewise of the mysterious hand rising out of the unknown mere to grasp King Arthur's sword, and of other mystic details of his passing. The Anglo-Saxon transactions are, however, of more tangible authenticity. The succession of kings and bishops and the chief events in their lives are recorded sometimes by contemporary writers, and at others by historians at no great interval of time from their day. We need no grain of salt in the matter of Aidan's preaching and persuading, of St Cuthbert's ascetic meditations on the Farne Islands for nine years, of the woeful ending of King Oswald's encounter with the pagan Penda, or of the careful conservation of his head and arm by the monks of Lindisfarne in the same reliquary that held the remains of St Cuthbert; nor need we hesitate to accept the

accounts of the various sieges the castle withstood, from the old, old time when it was only timbered, till it was given up to Athelstan in 924. We may receive without question the statement that the wife of Robert de Mowbray, the third Earl of Northumberland, held the castle against William Rufus till her husband was brought before its walls with the threat that his eyes should be put out unless she surrendered; that it was Henry the Second who built the keep we now see about 1164; that Edward the Third's queen, Philippa, was in residence in it in 1333, and Margaret of Anjou in 1462; and that the Earl of Warwick laid siege to it in 1464 with the terrible menace that if the besieged did not deliver up the 'Jewel' whole and unbroken with ordnance it should cost the head of the chieftain, Sir Ralph Grey, as well as the head of a lesser personage for every gun-shot that was fired. Then it was that the stones of the walls flew into the sea as the cannonade went

on, and one of the guns, named Dysion (they seem to have been named in those days) sent destruction into Sir Ralph's chamber, till at last the castle was won and the brave defender taken and executed at Doncaster. Its later history is well known. It is understood it did not recover from this catastrophe, and Sir John Forster, the constable in the reign of Elizabeth, allowed it to fall into complete ruin. It was then purchased by Bishop Crewe; and subsequently restored by one of his trustees, Archdeacon Sharp, in 1758. The castle sits as on a throne, and the bravery of the two maidens, Dorothy Forster and Grace Darling, that glorifies the quiet village, seems but the due outcome of the courage of the unrecorded generations that so often defended it.

Whether the new railway now in course of construction at North Sunderland will affect this alluring environment of romance and history remains to be proved.

THE MURUTS OF NORTH BORNEO.



HERE are many scientific problems awaiting solution in the great island of Borneo, not the least among them being the origin and history of the races inhabiting the country, from the war-loving, head-hunting Sea-Dyak down to that mysterious race the Ukits, who are said to be houseless and clothesless, who neither hunt nor till the ground, but follow the trail of the wild-pig and live on the roots which they grub out of the ground, robbing the very swine of the fruit of their researches. It is not the object of this present writer to attempt the solution of the question, but rather to add to the general stock of knowledge by describing what he knows of the Muruts of North Borneo, after a residence of two years among them.

The Muruts inhabit the basin of the Padas River—the chief tributary of which is the Pagalan—rising probably in Kinabalu, the highest mountain in Borneo (attaining to the respectable height of some thirteen thousand feet), and flowing south until it joins the main stream at Sapong. The basin of the Pagalan consists of a great valley, of which the average width is ten miles, while it is probably a hundred miles long. Two ranges of hills, rising in places to the height of four thousand feet, and covered to the very summit with dense vegetation, enclose this plain. The Pagalan being unnavigable even for the smallest *prahu*, this huge plain is at present cut off from the coast; the only communication being by means of native tracks, and all goods having to be transported on men's backs. Langland grass—coarse, and reaching to the height of a man's shoulders—covers the plain, which, together with the neighbouring jungle, shelters and feeds game of various kinds: the

tombado or wild-ox, several varieties of deer, the wild-pig, the honey-bear, the jungle-fowl, four or five kinds of pigeon; and, finally, snipe, golden-plover, and duck in their season. The soil is of excellent quality, as is shown by the small patches on which rice is cultivated by the Muruts, where the minimum of labour and the crudest of appliances and skill return a bounteous harvest. Tobacco is grown, and flourishes even with native ideas, which simply consist of putting the seed in the ground; while there is every indication, from the small amount of Arabian coffee planted, that much success would attend its cultivation on a large scale. Of European products, lettuce, tomatoes, and kidney-beans have been grown with little trouble. The temperature of this tableland, which is between one thousand and two thousand feet above the sea-level, is very different from that of Labuan or Sandakan, on the coast. The early morning and the evening are cold—often too cold for one resident any length of time in the tropics to sit out on the veranda—while the heat of mid-day is often tempered by a cool breeze. The rainfall is not excessive, and is well distributed over the various months of the year. Finally, the country is healthy for any European who is able to live in the tropics. The British North Borneo Company possesses here a tract of land of the greatest value, which will undoubtedly draw to itself the attention of planters as soon as they open it up by making a good, quick line of communication with the coast at its nearest point.

The Muruts are a race small in stature, light-brown in complexion (when one arrives at the skin with which Nature endowed them), with jet-black hair; in many cases the nose is flat and the stomach protuberant. From the fact that there

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appear to be few old men and women among them, we may conclude that they are short-lived; nor is this to be wondered at when we consider their mode of life. In the first place, they pluck out their eyelashes, a frequent cause of inflammation of the eye and of subsequent blindness; and they grind down their teeth to the gums, thus preventing proper mastication. Their food consists chiefly of rice, to which they add as dainties coarse salt, salt-fish, chilli-pepper, pumpkins, the heart of the coco-nut palm, of the sago palm, and of other trees, and vegetables culled in the jungle. There is practically no attempt made to grow vegetables, in spite of the luxuriant produce they give with little trouble. On festive occasions, such as funerals, the Muruts kill a goat, a pig, or a buffalo, and eat the flesh cooked in the blood. They almost invariably drink the warm liquor in which their rice or meat is cooked. It is sad to relate that they never lose an opportunity of eating animals that have died a natural death, and often when they are in an advanced stage of decomposition; in fact, one of their greatest luxuries is fish or buffalo-meat kept in a bamboo until the stench of it is unbearable to Europeans. When hard pressed for food they eat the tapioca-root and raw sago. Of intoxicating liquors they make three kinds from rice: one fairly harmless, thick with pounded rice, called *lelutow*; another, the common drink of the Murut, *tapei*; a third, a kind of refined *tapei*, a clear, heady liquor, blessed with the name *tinagei*. A drinking-party of Muruts is a sight never to be forgotten. The house reeking with filth and *tapei*; the rows of blackened human heads grinning down on the drinkers; the huge jars, each surrounded with a small crowd of drunken or expectant Muruts; the relaxed forms of men and women lying stupefied on the floor, amidst all the filth; the children, excited by liquor, clanging the gongs, in monotonous rhythm—all contribute to the horror of a scene degrading to mankind. Yet there is a rude etiquette even here. *Tapei* is drunk from the large jars in which it is made. A leaf pierced with holes is placed over the mouth of the jar. Through this leaf a slender bamboo pipe passes, reaching nearly to the bottom of the jar. The perforated leaf is filled with water, which takes the place of the liquid sucked up the bamboo by the drinker. The etiquette of drinking is as follows: The owner of the jar of *tapei* asks the most important man present to drink, an invitation which is cordially accepted. The host then fills the leaf with water, takes a little suck to see that the tube is working properly, and then sits down to entertain his guest while he drinks. It is his duty to see that his guest does not pull up the tube, as the strongest liquor is at the bottom of the jar; and the height of politeness is to firmly press down the tube if the guest tries to escape drunkenness by avoiding the strong liquor below. A small basin is placed above the

jar, in which are cut lemons, salt, salt-fish, chilli-pepper, and other things calculated to excite thirst. When the guest has finished his drink he signifies the same by putting his finger on the leaf, and showing the tip of it to his host. If the finger is dry, the host tests the leaf himself, poking his fingers into the crevices to try and find a little moisture. Should he discover enough to wet the tip of his finger, the guest must continue drinking. On completely emptying the leaf of water, the guest must in turn fill up the leaf for his host, must guard the tube jealously, and must see that he drinks until the leaf is dry. There are often some twenty to thirty jars broached on such an occasion, and some hundred to two hundred people are present. The drinking-bout usually lasts three days.

The general characteristic of the Murut is lethargy, physical and mental. It is with the greatest difficulty that he can be persuaded to do any work, and that work will be done in the most slovenly and slipshod fashion. His wife seeks his food, cooks it, and sets it before him. He is obliged to help in making the rice-field; but, in this case even, he takes care that his wife and children do more than their fair share of the work. Cowardice is one of his failings, even to the extent of taking the heads of women and children, and then boasting of the exploit. Occasionally the Murut hunts or fishes; but in both cases his success is indifferent, owing to his laziness and want of skill. The wickerwork traps that he sets in running streams for fish show some invention, and are of rather intricate construction. Until the advent of the European officer, it was the custom to set spring-traps for game, shooting a spear with such force as to kill a deer. The position of these traps was known to all the inhabitants of the village near where they were set; but strangers were often killed by them. Fortunately they are now forbidden by law, and a heavy fine is incurred by anybody setting them; but one who is fond of sport has still to be wary, as it is hard to kill the custom. The commonest way of killing the deer now is by fixing stout nets at one end of a wood, and beating the wood by men and dogs in the direction of the nets. The *coup de grâce* is given with the hunting-spear. The blowpipe with its poisoned arrows is also used by the Murut; but it is a clumsy weapon at the best, as the game does not die at once when hit, but is sometimes as long as half-an-hour in succumbing, and consequently in most cases easily escapes its hunter.

At one time the valley of the Pagalan must have been thickly inhabited, for wherever one goes one sees the evidences of former cultivation; but the population is now sparse, owing probably to two causes—disease and head-hunting. Of the former we speak shortly hereafter; of the latter we can only say that, before the British North Borneo Company sent an officer to administer the

district, no one was safe either in his home, his rice-field, or on a journey. To this day, though there is peace in the land, no Murut thinks of going as far as his field without taking his weapons with him. Of these, the defensive include a coat and helmet of deer or buffalo hide, and a square shield of the same material; the offensive, the spear, long and short, the blowpipe, and the parang, a short, heavy, cutting weapon, whose handle and scabbard are ornamented with tufts of human hair. In fighting, the two opponents squat on their haunches behind their shields, peeping occasionally round the corner to watch the tactics of the foe. Should one or the other uncover himself, he would be immediately fired at with the blowpipe. Every opportunity is taken to approach the enemy. In days gone by a fight of this kind frequently lasted till night-time, as each advanced or retired with the utmost caution. If a man were killed the victors made a great feast, buffaloes were slaughtered, and the village to a man was drunk for the next three days; the dead man was cut up by his foes, every one of his bones being treasured, carefully dried and smoked, and finally hung up in the chief's house. It was customary to file the teeth of a man when he got his first head; but as the government has made heads scarce, the teeth are now filed on any great drinking occasion, especially on one held in connection with the heads they already possess. People who are killed in an *amok* are cut up in the same way as those who lose their life in a fight. Villages are often protected by placing in the ground among the grass and brushwood sharpened bamboos. These primitive caltrops are very effective. People who die a natural death are generally doubled up and fitted into a jar, which in former days was sealed up, and sometimes kept in the dwelling-room for a year before being buried in graves under the house or quite close to it. These graves are ornamented in a rough fashion, the only attempt at art that a Murut makes; the finials of the square earthen grave being frequently moulded into the shape of a man's head, with a pipe in his mouth; a palm-leaf (*atap*) roofed hut is built over the grave, the gables being adorned with wooden projections resembling a pair of buffalo horns; the woodwork is painted with wavy lines of red and black, wooden representations of birds and men are placed on the posts of the fence surrounding the grave, while the whole is bedecked with flags of varied hues. On the grave itself are placed a bowl of water, two or three sticks of sugar-cane, and a few vegetables, apparently in the hope that the ghost will find food, and so be content in his new quarters, and will not disturb the living by appearing in his old home.

It is difficult to get at the belief of the Muruts with regard to their dead; but it is certain that they recognise a body and a soul, and have an

idea that the body dies and is utterly destroyed, but that the soul (or *ambiro-o*, as they call it) may reappear in the form of a ghost. These ghosts are accounted active agents in causing illness and unlucky dreams; and the medical treatment of the Murut doctors consists in making every effort to dislodge them from the patient. An animal is slaughtered, and the sick man is bedaubed with the blood, gongs are violently beaten, sudden shouts are raised, and the bulbous roots of a plant which emits a particularly foul and suffocating smell are burnt, in the hope of driving away the ghost. In answer to inquiries concerning the Murut view of the future state of the departed, some have declared that the *ambiro-o* live on the top of Kinabalu, a mountain seen from all parts of their country. The word *pinagaringgan* is used for the good spirit, or the place in which the good spirit dwells; while *kinapoonan* designates the evil spirit or his home. This fact shows the lethargy of the mind of the Murut; he does not take the trouble to distinguish between the person and the abode of the spirit; and when pushed for an answer to such questions, he replies that he does not know, that he has not been there to see, and he seems quite content with his ignorance. In taking an oath he calls on *pinagaringgan* to witness, and prays for destruction and the foulest ill-treatment to be meted out to himself, and especially to his female relatives, murrain on his buffaloes, and blight on his rice-crops, should he break his plighted troth. To make this oath binding blood must be shed; a fowl, goat, cow, or buffalo being killed, according to the importance of the occasion, of which the blood is poured upon a stone, the stone being afterwards solemnly buried in the earth, while both parties to the oath punctuate each sentence with a blow struck by a *parang* on a piece of wood. It may be remarked that even at the moment of taking an oath, an event which a Murut looks upon as supremely important, the two parties swearing vie with each other in calling down the vilest treatment imaginable upon their mothers, wives, and children should they be false to their plight, and each filthy remark is received with loud laughter and evident appreciation by the assembled natives.

The diseases of the Muruts are chiefly such as follow dirty habits. Skin diseases and diseases of the eye are common; while malarial fever and dysentery are not infrequent. Some twenty years ago an epidemic of smallpox carried off a great part of the population. The natives were terrified; many fled to the jungle, but their dread foe followed them even there, and at last they resorted to the plan of immediately putting to death any one infected with the disease. So great was the impression made that even lately, when a vaccination officer was sent up, the natives came in crowds to submit to an operation of which they knew nothing, but which they readily

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believed, on the white man's word, would be efficacious in preventing their suffering from such an epidemic again.

The Muruts are nominally polygamists; but in practice each man has but one wife, the exceptions being few and mostly confined to the chiefs. The price of a wife is regulated by the price of her mother; one hundred Mexican dollars or its equivalent in buffaloes or jars being commonly paid to the father. It may be mentioned, for the sake of the uninitiated, that in Borneo various kinds of large earthenware jars, standing two and three feet high, and in many cases of great antiquity, are highly prized. To the inhabitants of Borneo they are what pictures or *objets d'art* are to us.

This race of people has several kinds of musical instruments, both wind and stringed. Of the former, the two most curious are a nose-flute, resembling our flute in all points, but which is played by breathing into it through the nostrils instead of with the mouth, the notes produced being very soft and pleasant; and the mouth-organ, made of the hard shell of a pumpkin-like

vegetable, into which are let bamboos pierced with holes at various heights, to act as organ-pipes. Of the stringed instruments, one is a rough kind of guitar, while another, made of bamboo, is cylindrical in shape, and the strings, which are supported by bridges, are strips of bamboo raised from the body of the instrument.

Lastly, the language of the Muruts has a copious vocabulary, while its inflections are bewildering, everybody seeming to the novice to inflect as he or she pleases. As might be expected, it is almost entirely wanting in words expressing abstract thought, such terms as 'love' and 'reverence' being unknown, the nearest equivalents being 'want' and 'fear' respectively. Owing to the want of intercommunication in the past, nearly every village has its own dialect. Missionaries are now at work among them, and it is to be hoped that one of the good results of their presence will be the preservation of this language, which is almost sure to disappear before Malay, a beautiful tongue spoken even at this present time by many Muruts.

LOUIS NAPOLEON AT BOULOGNE—1840.

By ONE WHO WAS THERE.



HE recent manifesto of a new claimant for the empire of the Bonapartes brings vividly before me an interesting recollection of my early youth.

It was in the August of 1840, when Prince Louis Napoleon (later on, for eighteen years, the Emperor Napoleon III.) made his premature and ill-advised landing at Wimereux, a village some few miles from Boulogne-sur-Mer. Viewed in the light of after-events, the Prince's attempt was not altogether so foolhardy and desperate as it appeared at the moment; but it certainly did turn out to be a very unfortunate affair indeed.

We were passing the summer holidays at Boulogne, at a corner house on the Place d'Armes, in the old Haute Ville, surrounded by its venerable and picturesque ramparts. At a very early hour on the morning of the 6th of August we were surprised by a visit from a French friend, who, with great excitement, made the startling announcement, '*On vient de battre la Générale.*' With our somewhat limited knowledge of the French language we naturally imagined that some general officer and his troops had been defeated; but, on a further explanation, it appeared that *la Générale* was the mustering call to arms for the National Guard, of which every French citizen is a member. And, sure enough, a body of soldiers, with drummers beating their inspiring charge, were at the very moment parading the streets.

'Oh! then and there was hurrying to and fro.' Workmen left their tasks, tradesmen emerged from their shops, eagerly equipping themselves in the regulation uniform; and one and all hastened to the appointed place of rendezvous.

Prince Louis Napoleon, accompanied by General Montholon, and with about fifty followers, had, it appeared, landed at an early hour that morning at the village of Wimereux, and had at once marched to the Column of the Grande Armée on the heights of Boulogne, where he had authoritatively summoned the soldiers in the neighbouring barracks to join his standard. This the soldiers had prudently and decidedly refused to do; and, after some parleying and skirmishing, the Prince and his followers, recognising the utter hopelessness of their position, had made their way to the seashore in order to re-embark. This was, however, prevented by the zeal of the then royalist Boulognese, and the Prince was taken prisoner on the sands of the seaside.

On hearing of these exciting events, three of us youngsters, disregarding the anxious entreaties of our French governess in charge (who was somewhat in the perplexing position of the prudent hen with the adventurous ducklings), started off and made our way down to the Port, to see for ourselves what was happening. Boulogne being a very favourite bathing-resort, and the Port being a long, tedious walk on a hot summer morning, a number of miniature omnibuses plied between the corner of the Rue de l'Écu and the

Établissement des Bains at the farther extremity of the Port, to convey intending bathers from the town to the regular bathing-machines that awaited them. There were several rival companies (or *concurrences des bains*), each provided with its own omnibus. It was one of these vehicles, belonging to Messieurs Sauvage et Caboche, that had been hastily selected as a conveyance for the captive Prince, a square little omnibus, surrounded with tarpaulin curtains looped back on either side. In this improvised state carriage, surrounded by armed soldiers, and escorted by half the population of the town, the future emperor was conveyed a prisoner along the Port and the Rue de l'Écu, up the Grande Rue to the Château entrenched behind the ramparts of the Haute Ville. We daring young folks arrived upon the Port just in time to take part in the motley procession. Our sympathies, I may explain, were entirely on the side of the captive Prince; so much so that my brother, with the reckless daring of an English schoolboy, shouted out, in the very middle of the Grande Rue (perhaps the only voice amid that vast concourse that ventured to raise the cry upon that occasion), '*Vive l'Empereur!*' He was at once set upon by an indignant French youth, who clutched him by the throat, addressing him by the opprobrious epithet of '*Cochon Anglais!*' With some difficulty we succeeded in tearing them apart before any mischief had been done, and the small affray passed unnoticed in the confusion of the hurrying crowd.

When at last the place of destination was reached, the pressure of the eager multitude became intolerable. As usual in a crowd—especially in France—the fair element was not wanting; and I well remember our amusement at hearing some over-pushed Frenchman, forgetting his own individual curiosity and the proverbial gallantry of his countrymen, exclaim with great indignation against the women in his vicinity, '*Les femmes sont bien curieuses dans ce pays-ci!*' As the bathing-carriage was about to pass within the archway leading to the Château, we caught a glimpse (through an opening between the curtains of the carriage) of the calm, pale face and dark, thoughtful eyes of the captive Prince as he glanced towards the prison before him. The carriage entered in, and the ponderous gates were closed; the soldiers mounted guard, and the crowd slowly dispersed. For some days the Prince was detained in the Château; then one night we were excited to observe, from the windows of our house, a troop of horsemen waiting in the Place d'Armes; and the next news announced that Prince Napoleon had been conveyed to the prison at Ham, where he remained closely confined for the space of five years—years that were not wasted, but passed in earnest study and reflection, from which he reaped the benefit in his future career.

Immediately after the departure of the prisoner Prince, the loyalty of the Boulognese was duly

rewarded by a visit from the king, Louis Philippe, and his family. Great enthusiasm prevailed; the whole town was a scene of triumph and festivity. Once again the Grande Rue was thronged to witness another, but very different, procession. Instead of the closely-guarded captive in the bathing-carriage, the king, accompanied by his gallant sons, rode on horseback, surrounded by a military escort and crowds of cheering spectators, while the royal princesses followed in open carriages, dispensing smiles and bows to all around. It was altogether a very triumphant and gorgeous affair, which literally fulfilled the description in the old song:

The king of France, with twenty thousand men,
Marched up the hill, and then marched down again.

Alas for the futility of human hopes and the constancy of popular favour! Eight years after these triumphal proceedings the king, Louis Philippe, under the *alias* of Mr Smith, was escaping from Paris, to end his days in exile; and four years later the Prisoner of Ham was reigning at the Tuileries as the Emperor Napoleon III. Eighteen years afterwards came the disaster of Sedan and the collapse of the Second Empire. What further development the future may have in store time alone can tell.

A SEASCAPE.

OVER the waters' face a darkness falls,
Out on the trackless race where sea-bird calls,
Rolling with reckless grace, labours and hauls
A black-hulled ship.

Dark are her spars and sails. A wind on high,
Through rigging whistling, wails, and, sighing by,
Whispers strange goblin tales with long-drawn sigh
And trembling lip.

From glistening rail to truck, each rope and shroud
Rakes dim against the ruck of bankèd cloud;
A burst of sunlight struck o'er waves dark-browed
Rainbows the scud.

Athwart the plunging bows the breakers sweep,
The heaving swell endows with life her leap—
With gurgling rush she ploughs her scuppers deep
Beneath the flood.

Sullen in western sky, wind-racked and gray,
The sun sinks down to die and fades a day;
The black-hulled ship drives by on lonesome way
Into the night.

Afar on every side on urgent rein
The white sea-horses ride with tossing mane,
Fast creeps the eventide o'er watery plain
And pales the light.

J. J. S.